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Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund**The Peacebuilding Fund****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016, during which the Peacebuilding Fund allocated \$70.9 million to 17 countries. The year was marked by an overall improvement in programmatic results, demonstrating that three years of dedicated Fund support to country partners during project design, monitoring and evaluation, including a near fivefold increase in evaluations and a sixfold increase in support missions, had been a sound investment. Among its achievements and historic firsts, the Fund exceeded the United Nations-wide commitment to allocate at least 15 per cent of resources to women's empowerment, expanded its unique role in financing cross-border and regional peacebuilding initiatives, and launched the first United Nations dedicated funding stream in support of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security. Against these achievements and despite expressions of support from a wide range of Member States, including \$152.5 million raised during a September 2016 pledging conference, the Fund's financial health remains in question at a time when the demand for its assistance has reached historic highs. Options for securing adequate, sustainable financing for peacebuilding will be outlined in my upcoming report on sustaining peace in 2017.



I. Introduction

1. The present annual report, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016, is the seventh report submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to Assembly resolution 63/282. It covers the third and final year of the Business Plan 2014-2016 of the Peacebuilding Fund. This report will be complemented by a financial report issued by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office no later than 1 May 2017. Additional information can be found at <http://www.unpbf.org>, and complete information on individual projects can be found on the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Gateway (<http://mptf.undp.org>).

II. Global performance and lessons learned

2. The year 2016 heralded the historic adoption by the General Assembly and the Security Council of concurrent resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (see A/69/968-S/2015/490), the most comprehensive and far-reaching resolutions on peacebuilding to date. The emphasis of Assembly resolution 70/262 and Council resolution 2282 (2016) on the centrality of sustaining peace, which encompasses the imperative of conflict prevention, the need to address all stages of the conflict cycle, the importance of breaking silos, both at Headquarters and in the field, and the need to ensure national ownership and inclusivity, has important implications for the strategic priorities of the Peacebuilding Fund. In those resolutions, the Assembly and the Council welcomed the valuable work undertaken by the Fund as a catalytic, rapid-response and flexible pooled fund and recognized the need for United Nations peacebuilding efforts to have adequate, predictable and sustained financing.

3. With a view to replenishing the Peacebuilding Fund, a ministerial-level pledging conference was organized on the margins of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly in September 2016. The conference, co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya, the Netherlands, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, received strong political support from 32 ministers for foreign affairs who backed the Fund's approach and its contribution to sustaining peace. Notwithstanding this significant endorsement, the resulting \$152.5 million in pledges fell short of the \$300 million goal, the minimum amount needed to sustain operations for three years. As highlighted by the Deputy Secretary-General at the closing, the conference signified not the end but the beginning of efforts to secure adequate, predictable resources for the Fund. Such efforts include options for funding United Nations peacebuilding which will be outlined in my forthcoming report, mandated by the aforementioned resolutions, on sustaining peace.

4. During 2016, the Peacebuilding Support Office continued to warn that without predictable financing, it would not be able to sustain current levels of support, let alone meet growing demands. The Peacebuilding Fund allocated \$70,956,966 million to 17 countries in 2016 (see table 1 on the Fund's active portfolio). By contrast, it received \$57,760,692 million in contributions. The conference and multiple reviews and external evaluations of the Fund have recognized the singular role it plays in ensuring strategic coherence and funding politically risky yet

necessary endeavours. Such recognition will soon need to translate into predictable and sustainable financing if the Fund is to remain a reliable partner of States and societies committed to sustaining peace.

5. Given the success of its December 2015 investment along the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border, the Peacebuilding Fund refined this niche role in 2016, undertaking additional cross-border efforts along the Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire border and supporting the sustainable return of Somali refugees from Kenya to the Baidoa area of Somalia. Pursuant to the joint mission in the second quarter of 2016 of my Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, Mohammed Ibn Chambas, and the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Fund anticipates new initiatives to prevent violent extremism in the Sahel in 2017: one along the border of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger and the other between Cameroon and Chad. The Fund will also support regional dialogue in the Balkans, led by members of the Tripartite Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Fund's ability to invest across borders fills an important gap in peacebuilding funding and will continue to be one of the Fund's priorities.

6. In 2016, the Peacebuilding Fund more effectively implemented its mandate for taking calculated risks. In May, it allocated \$2 million to Somalia for strengthening local delivery of basic services, channelling funds through national systems, a first among donors. To enhance its ability to take such risks, the Fund adopted the use of performance-based tranches to both limit the Fund's financial exposure in risky settings and maximize its scarce resources. It has applied this practice by transferring only portions of its commitments of \$13 million to the Somalia priority plan, \$2.9 million to promote national reconciliation in Libya and \$2.3 million to leverage funding for the work of the Myanmar Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee. As the Fund contemplates new and continuing investments in 2017 in areas experiencing violence or political instability, such as Burundi, South Sudan and Yemen, it will turn increasingly to similar practices which encourage flexibility while minimizing exposure to risk.

7. Despite concerns over funding levels, the Peacebuilding Fund registered remarkable achievements in 2016. Previously, in 2015, it had for the first time met the target established in my Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding by allocating 15 per cent of resources to women's empowerment. In 2016, I am pleased to report that the Fund exceeded this target, allocating 20 per cent to women's empowerment. The Fund remains the only office within the United Nations Secretariat to have achieved this target. This important result was accomplished through a combination of measures, including further refinements in the methodology for calculating allocations and the launching of a third Gender Promotion Initiative. The Fund's next Business Plan will include clearer guidance on transparent budgeting for gender equality so as to ease future tracking of resources.

8. In addition to helping the Peacebuilding Fund surpass the 15 per cent target, the 2016 Gender Promotion Initiative, launched in tandem with the Fund's first-ever Youth Promotion Initiative, broke new ground on a number of other levels. It responded to recommendations in the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture to engage more closely with civil society by directly funding civil society organizations for the first time. The Gender and Youth Promotion Initiatives

together awarded \$7.7 million to civil society organizations in eight countries. In addition, the Youth Promotion Initiative provided the first-ever United Nations funding stream dedicated to implementing Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security.

9. Central to the Peacebuilding Fund's success is the strength of its partnerships. Throughout 2016, the Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission continued to enhance their collaboration. Building on the results of previous informal sessions, on Somalia, Burkina Faso and the region of West Africa, the Commission held a discussion on peacebuilding results in Kyrgyzstan, where the Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Kyrgyzstan highlighted the critical support received from the Fund for the Government's peacebuilding strategy, as well as for a cross-border initiative with Tajikistan. Beyond specific country engagement, the Commission held a discussion on challenges in mobilizing sufficient and predictable funding for peacebuilding in anticipation of the high-level pledging conference, during which it called upon Member States to pledge generously. Finally, the Chair of the Fund's Advisory Group briefed the Commission on the Group's December meeting centred on taking stock of results achieved by the Fund in 2016. The Chair also presented an outline of the Fund's next Business Plan and once again raised concerns about the Fund's financial situation.

10. The support of the Peacebuilding Fund also deepened the partnership of the United Nations with the World Bank in 2016. The two organizations co-led the design of recovery and peacebuilding planning processes in the Central African Republic and Yemen, and participated in fragility and strategic assessment missions in Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic. In Somalia, risk management support financed by the Fund helped the United Nations, the World Bank and the African Development Bank design and implement a comprehensive risk management strategy common to all three trust funds under the Somalia New Deal compact.

11. The Peacebuilding Fund also continued to promote system-wide coherence and the use of common funding pools to maximize the impact of its investments. In Colombia and Myanmar, the Fund was the first to contribute to United Nations-led common funding mechanisms to leverage additional funds and enable country teams to coherently engage the international community for support. In Sri Lanka, through government leadership, the Fund's priority plan process was utilized to develop a much broader peacebuilding strategy, thus positioning the Fund's \$7 million investment to leverage up to 10 times more funding. The Fund also utilized its support to drive cohesion in mission settings. Along the Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia border, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) have aligned their use of assessed contributions for programmatic funding with Fund investments. Moreover, the Fund worked closely with the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the deployment of peace and development advisers in non-mission settings as a means of ensuring that the Fund's investments are conflict-sensitive and guided by rigorous political analysis.

12. The Peacebuilding Fund continued to expand its partnership with regional actors and organizations and to promote regional approaches to peacebuilding. The

Peacebuilding Support Office began discussions on a standing memorandum of understanding with the African Union based on its ongoing partnership in Burundi, where it supported, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDP, the work of African Union human rights observers.

13. The Peacebuilding Fund also benefited from its long-standing partnership with the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, which generously hosted the Fund's fourth global workshop in Durban, South Africa, in November 2016, bringing together representatives of national Governments, civil society organizations and United Nations country teams from eight countries, as well as representatives of the African Union and the World Bank. Bilateral donors, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Sweden and the United States of America, also participated. The workshop, whose theme was "Investing in youth", provided an opportunity for frank discussion on challenges and opportunities with respect to engaging youth meaningfully and equitably in peacebuilding and on ways to take forward Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security.

14. During 2016 and in line with the emphasis in the aforementioned resolutions on sustaining peace throughout the conflict cycle, the Peacebuilding Fund continued to emphasize investments in violence prevention, de-escalation and stabilization. A \$900,000 allocation to the Office of my Special Envoy for Yemen, for example, will help facilitate a Yemeni-led political settlement. Investments in the Niger and along the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan and Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire borders aim at supporting Governments in responding effectively to citizens' demands before frustrations or mistrust escalates into violence.

15. The outlook for 2017 remains hopeful, with a number of countries, including Guinea and Sierra Leone, graduating from traditionally larger Peacebuilding Fund engagement. Further, the anticipated transition of peacekeeping missions in Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and Liberia will demand close partnership between missions and United Nations country teams, which the Fund is well positioned to support. As it enters its second decade, the Fund will continue to search for new and creative ways to improve the management of its scarce resources. In recognition of the increase in global needs and the renewed mandate provided by the General Assembly and the Security Council in their resolutions adopted in 2015, the Fund is doubly committed to improving and expanding its institutional partnerships, including with Interpeace, PeaceNexus and recipient United Nations organizations. However, its ability to answer the call put forward in those resolutions on peacebuilding and to fully implement its Business Plan remains contingent on its financial health.

Table 1
Peacebuilding Fund active portfolio including decisions taken in 2016

		2016 approvals		
		Cumulative transfers to date	Immediate Response Facility	Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility
Date of approval of priority plan		(United States dollars)		
Peacebuilding Commission countries				
Burundi	February 2008, May 2011, February 2014	63 941 966	3 296 784	—
Central African Republic	June 2008, February 2010	56 190 765	267 500	—
Guinea	April 2009, December 2011, December 2013 (multiple)	61 634 854	1 000 000	—
Guinea-Bissau	June 2008, January 2011, October 2015	32 157 534	534 184	—
Liberia	February 2008, May 2011, October 2013	46 318 671	1 949 888	—
Sierra Leone	October 2008, December 2010	52 169 736	—	—
Subtotal		312 413 526	7 048 356	—
Countries not in the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission				
Bosnia and Herzegovina		2 000 000	—	—
Colombia		2 000 000	3 000 000	—
Comoros	December 2008, May 2013	12 332 227	—	—
Côte d'Ivoire	July 2008, April 2014	33 727 750	3 500 000	—
Democratic Republic of the Congo	July 2009, June 2015	31 627 069	—	—
Guatemala	November 2010	13 331 723	10 406 919	—
Kenya ^a		1 500 000	500 000	—
Kyrgyzstan	September 2013	29 307 149	1 995 000	—
Libya		5 400 410	2 973 102	—
Madagascar	November 2015	7 007 180	—	—
Mali		13 432 177	3 975 146	—
Myanmar		10 080 846	3 243 641	—
Nepal	July 2008, May 2012	20 472 019	—	—
Niger	August 2015	13 099 650	—	—
Papua New Guinea	October 2014	9 090 836	—	—
Philippines		2 996 570	—	—
Solomon Islands		2 500 000	2 500 000	—
Somalia	June 2016	27 641 163	5 514 972	13 000 000
South Sudan	February 2013	14 521 947	—	—
Sri Lanka	August 2016	8 280 842	5 399 830	7 000 000

Date of approval of priority plan	2016 approvals		
	Cumulative transfers to date	Immediate Response Facility	Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility
(United States dollars)			
Tajikistan ^a	1 600 000	—	—
Yemen	20 703 554	900 000	—
Subtotal	282 653 112	43 908 610	20 000 000
Total^b	602 144 994	50 956 966	20 000 000

Source: Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, January 2017.

Note: Table 1 reflects funding decisions that were taken in 2016, not funds transferred.

^a As a counterpart to cross-border projects. Inclusion does not indicate the eligibility of Kenya or Tajikistan to access the Peacebuilding Fund.

^b Includes countries with an active Peacebuilding Fund portfolio in 2016.

III. Country-specific engagements of the Peacebuilding Fund

A. Countries in the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission

Burundi: supporting dialogue spaces and human rights during continued crisis

16. The situation in Burundi is characterized by continued political impasse, human rights violations, refugee flows into neighbouring countries and deterioration of the economic and humanitarian situation. Key in this context is access to verifiable information, which the Peacebuilding Fund supports through funding provided to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to undertake vital human rights monitoring and reporting. For the first time, the Fund also provided direct funding to a regional organization, i.e., through support to the deployment of 32 out of 100 authorized African Union human rights observers engaged in monitoring and documenting human rights violations in Bujumbura and other areas of the country.

17. The Peacebuilding Fund also continued to promote dialogue and conflict resolution capacities at the local level. A network of more than 500 women mediators have continued to address local conflicts and have brought together women of different political affiliations; urban youth were provided with targeted socioeconomic opportunities to improve social cohesion and community security; and children and youth in various provinces of Burundi were enabled to engage in peaceful conflict resolution and to develop cultural competence and tolerance through interactive theatre and psychosocial support.

18. The political context, however, has negatively affected implementation of the current peacebuilding priority plan. Notably, resources approved to support mediation efforts led by the East African Community could not be absorbed owing to a lack of commitment of various Burundian stakeholders to engage in an inclusive political dialogue. The United Nations country team and the Peacebuilding Fund secretariat continue to adapt to the context in order to provide flexible support, as evidenced by the broadening of partnerships, for example, with the African Union.

Central African Republic: support for recovery and peace consolidation

19. On 1 March 2016, the Constitutional Court proclaimed the final results of the presidential election held in the Central African Republic, confirming Faustin Archange Touadéra as President and putting an end to the country's two-year political transition. A Peacebuilding Fund-supported project provided assistance for the development of a code of good conduct, signed by political parties and presidential candidates in December 2015, which guided the generally peaceful electoral campaign.

20. After taking office, Mr. Touadéra confirmed his Government's determination to confront the root causes of the conflict, including through dialogue with armed groups. Despite these positive steps, the country continues to face peacebuilding challenges, exacerbated by limited state capacities.

21. In this context, a national plan for recovery and peace consolidation, which outlines needs and priorities for the coming five years, including peace and security and a renewed social contract, provided the basis for a November 2016 donors conference held in Brussels. At the conference, the Government and the international community signed a five-year strategic *Cadre d'engagement*, ensuring nationally led strategic engagement at the highest political level to implement the Government's key priorities and consolidate peace and stability.

22. The Peacebuilding Fund's ongoing projects are already aligned with both frameworks. In 2016, a community violence reduction initiative, implemented by the International Organization for Migration under the leadership of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, provided temporary employment to approximately 2,000 ex-Séléka combatants and members of communities to which they returned. In addition, the Fund supported the restoration of public security and basic services, including the rehabilitation and equipping of administrative buildings, in the prefectures of Obo and Birao.

23. An important package of support from the Peacebuilding Fund for fighting impunity, reforming the security sector and promoting political dialogue will be rolled out in 2017, to help kick-start the implementation of the national plan and the *Cadre d'engagement*.

Guinea: consolidating achievements in strategic priority areas

24. Following prolonged talks, political parties agreed, on 12 October 2016, to hold long-overdue local elections in February 2017, to consolidate the gains of the relatively peaceful presidential elections.

25. The second phase of the second peacebuilding priority plan, which allocated more than \$15 million, ended in 2016. Through the plan, Guinea has achieved progress in security sector reform, national reconciliation, democratization, provision of socioeconomic support to vulnerable youth including ex-associates of the armed forces, and institutionalization of local conflict resolution mechanisms.

26. Specifically, the Peacebuilding Fund supported holistic security sector reform, thereby contributing to changes in legal and policy frameworks, capacity development for security and defence forces and the harmonization of international

support. A framework for community policing has been created and 550 police officers have been trained in utilizing the new approach. The national police academy reopened after 15 years. The Fund's investments have also helped leverage further support from the European Union and the United States, totalling more than \$17 million, as well as \$7 million invested by the Government of Guinea in 2016.

27. While the overall impact of the Peacebuilding Fund's investment will be confirmed through a final independent evaluation in 2017, Guinea is set to become the first country to transition from the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, emitting a signal of strong confidence in the progress it has made through a decade of Fund and Peacebuilding Commission support.

Guinea-Bissau: supporting dialogue and national reconciliation

28. Guinea-Bissau continues to struggle with unstable institutions and a political stalemate, which affects the effective governing of the country and implementation of the priority plan. Through the plan, the Peacebuilding Fund has supported the good offices of my Special Representative and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in sustaining mediation efforts, currently led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). These efforts have resulted in the creation of a road map and the signing by all major political stakeholders of the Conakry Agreement on 14 October 2016. At the same time, the Mission has assisted the organizing committee of the national conference on the theme "Paths to peace and development" in achieving capacity development and has contributed to a more inclusive preparation of the national reconciliation process.

29. While a civil registration project which will provide the foundation for the access of vulnerable groups to social services and civic participation experienced a successful start in 2016, the implementation of a project aimed at contributing to the achievement of a more effective justice sector was hampered by the political impasse. The United Nations country team and the Mission continue to facilitate the development and implementation of projects designed to respond to challenges and remain flexible as regards programming within this difficult political environment.

Liberia: consolidating gains during mission drawdown

30. The year 2016 marked the end of all projects supported by the Peacebuilding Fund's \$30 million two-phase investment in Liberia. The projects supported by those investments, launched in 2011, will be evaluated independently so as to capture the peacebuilding results achieved.

31. Through the two phases, the Peacebuilding Fund has supported the Liberian peacebuilding plan and reconciliation road map, through which justice and security investments have been paired with reconciliation mechanisms. Since 2011, the justice and security services have begun decentralizing through three justice and security hubs. Fund-supported county peace committees play a key role in mediating local-level conflicts, while the Palava Hut process supports dialogue and healing for conflict-related human rights violations. At community level, peace huts provide women with space for participation in local peacebuilding and addressing domestic violence. While some peace huts are self-sustaining through economic

empowerment initiatives, others still require additional investments to ensure their sustainability.

32. The Peacebuilding Fund approved a total of \$3 million for the engagement of Liberia in a cross-border initiative with Côte d'Ivoire in 2017. The project, designed to build confidence among border security actors and communities, responds to calls from the Presidents of both countries for attention to border areas in anticipation of the drawdown of the peacekeeping missions. The project will be paired with programmatic funds from each mission's assessed contributions to ensure that communities along the border receive attention.

33. In 2016, the Peacebuilding Fund also approved its first direct contribution to a local non-governmental organization, Educare, in order to strengthen women's participation in the resolution of conflicts related to natural resources management.

34. Looking ahead, the Peacebuilding Fund will continue to provide support to Liberia, as it anticipates the completion of the engagement of United Nations peacekeeping and the presidential election.

Sierra Leone: strengthening human rights capacity and preventing electoral violence

35. The Peacebuilding Fund supported the deployment of a peace and development adviser and a human rights adviser and strengthened the capacities of the Human Rights Commission in 2016. The general elections scheduled for early 2018 will be the first to be held without the presence of a Security Council-mandated mission, which represents an important milestone in the country's democratic transition. The Fund will work closely with the United Nations country team and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) to prevent or mitigate electoral violence, notably through youth engagement.

B. Other recipient countries

Bosnia and Herzegovina: youth find their voice through the dialogue platform

36. The Peacebuilding Fund's \$2 million investment in the project "Dialogue for the future" wound down in 2016, having reached upward of 30 per cent of the population. Implemented by UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the project, which was supported by the three members of the Tripartite Presidency, sought to bolster social cohesion by providing space for citizens from all three constituent groups and others to interact and discuss peace- and trust-building priorities with each other and with decision makers. Through an independent evaluation, it was found that the project, with its strong youth angle, had helped reduce youth disaffection from an astonishing 97 per cent in 2012 to 87 per cent in 2016. The project also gave focus to intercultural education and triggered cooperation among university students in Banja Luka, Mostar and Sarajevo.

Colombia: assisting victims of decades-long conflict

37. The historic peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP), signed by the parties and ratified by the country's congress in November, has brought renewed hope for lasting peace. In August, the Peacebuilding Fund approved a project designed to support collective reparations to victims of the armed conflict. This project, implemented by UNDP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in close collaboration with the Government of Colombia, focuses on supporting victims in areas with a historic presence of FARC-EP, thereby helping to pave the way for a smooth implementation of the agreement and for building trust in the peace process. Support for this project was channelled, in February 2016, through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund of the United Nations for Post-Conflict in Colombia, to which the Fund was an early contributor. Since then, a total of more than \$40 million in contributions has been mobilized for the implementation of the peace agreement.

Côte d'Ivoire: prevention through nationwide conflict mapping

38. The second priority plan for Côte d'Ivoire consolidates earlier peacebuilding gains by reinforcing state capacity to deliver services and foster social cohesion, and by reinforcing local-level conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms. With regard to the latter, real-time conflict mapping has allowed quick reaction and adjusted interventions, including a shift in focus to the north after an outbreak of violent conflict between farmers and cattle breeders. In addition, targeted support to local authorities led to the establishment of regional security committees. They facilitated regular dialogues between communities and security actors which led to an increased level of trust, thereby enabling the peaceful environment during the electoral period at the end of 2016.

39. CARE International, the first civil society recipient of support from the Peacebuilding Fund in Côte d'Ivoire, will work in the Liberian border region to reinforce the participation of women and youth in existing conflict resolution systems. The complementarity with the newly approved cross-border project means that the entire spectrum of inter- and non-governmental actors, as well as the Government, will be working together to foster social cohesion.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: supporting stabilization

40. Amid deadly protests and polarized debate over elections and the upholding of the constitution, particularly regarding presidential terms of office, the Government and the opposition reached an agreement on 31 December, whereby President Kabila will remain in power until elections are held by December 2017. In the interim, it is expected that a national council for overseeing the electoral agreement and process will be established and that a new prime minister will be named from the opposition.

41. Against this background, the security situation has continued to affect the population in the east of the country disproportionately. The Peacebuilding Fund has been supporting the stabilization efforts of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) since

2009, through funding under the International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy. Investments by the Fund cover the five pillars of the Strategy, including dialogue; security; restoration of state authority; return, reintegration and recovery; and sexual and gender-based violence. The projects, supported by provincial state authorities, have contributed to reduced intercommunal tensions. Specifically, more than 130,000 persons have benefited from peaceful conflict resolution and management through democratic dialogue processes. Support for the restoration of state authority, accompanied by income-generating activities, has consolidated initial gains in conflict transformation at the local level. Fund investments have brought tangible improvements on the ground, including the construction of a number of police and local government offices, and a legal clinic for victims of sexual violence. As a complement to infrastructure improvements, 130 police officers were trained and deployed and the capacities of judicial personnel were strengthened, which contributed to better performance by security actors throughout the sector. A total of 3,350 people (50 per cent of them women) benefited from socioeconomic activities, which resulted in a strengthening of the cohesion and resilience of communities and a raising of the voice of women in their family and community.

Guatemala: extending the fight against impunity

42. Throughout 2016, Guatemala continued to witness political and institutional changes, triggered in part by the pursuit of justice for current and past violations led by the Office of the Public Prosecutor, in coordination with the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala. Specifically, 2016 saw a major breakthrough in transitional justice, with several perpetrators of gross human rights violations committed during the armed conflict brought to justice.

43. Amid these transformative changes, in an independent evaluation of the Guatemala peacebuilding priority plan 2011-2015, it was found that the plan had contributed significantly to the strengthening of justice and security institutions and helped increase citizens' trust.

44. Following the evaluation, it was recommended by a joint mission of the Fund and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat that there be a second phase of funding so as to maintain the current momentum in the fight against impunity by means of renewed support to the strengthening of the rule of law, particularly transitional and criminal justice, through state institutions and civil society.

45. In response, in September 2016, the Peacebuilding Fund approved a project aimed at strengthening national capacities to fight impunity, focusing on the investigative capacities of the Office of the General Prosecutor with respect to cases involving illegal groups and clandestine organizations, and cases of femicide. A second phase of investment in Guatemala in the amount of \$9 million, which includes a package of six projects addressing transitional justice, entailing, inter alia, support to indigenous women survivors of gender-based violence and the institutionalization of dialogue centred around social conflict, was approved in late 2016.

Kyrgyzstan: improved local-level relations bode well for the future

46. Kyrgyzstan's three-year priority plan, which had been supported by the Peacebuilding Fund through a \$15.1 million investment, ended in 2016. The plan focused on three outcomes: (a) peace and reconciliation through strengthened policy and legal frameworks; (b) building capacity of local self-governing bodies to manage local conflicts and support social cohesion; and (c) provision of multilingual education to ensure that all citizens have access to economic and educational opportunities. The strong leadership provided by the Office of the President and the United Nations Resident Coordinator yielded results that, while still tentative, instil confidence in the direction of the path ahead.

47. Nationwide perception surveys reveal an increase in citizens' confidence in the capacities of local self-governing bodies to resolve conflicts, from 30 per cent at the outset of the plan in 2014 to 82 per cent at its conclusion. Citizens' perceptions reflect an actual decline in conflict in districts targeted by the priority plan, from 82 instances of violence in 2014 to only 10 in 2016. Positive momentum has triggered popular optimism, with 98 per cent of citizens perceiving an improvement in inter-ethnic relations.

48. These positive trends stem from concrete improvements in areas targeted by the priority plan, including an increase in female police officers from 0 to 7 per cent in the period from 2014 to 2016, despite an overall decline nationwide. Local self-governing authorities and citizens jointly identified and implemented more than 120 local infrastructure projects aimed at smoothing tensions over scarce natural resources; and multilingual education has reached more than 9,000 students, thereby helping to increase inter-ethnic understanding and raise life chances for historically marginalized groups.

49. The impressiveness of these achievements notwithstanding, new challenges have recently emerged, related particularly to recruitment carried out by religious extremist groups. Moving forward, the Peacebuilding Fund will identify opportunities for continuing its support to Kyrgyzstan and consolidating these gains.

Libya: supporting national reconciliation

50. The Peacebuilding Fund approved a \$2.9 million project entitled "Towards national reconciliation in Libya" to assist Libyan national and local authorities, civil society and other partners in their effort to promote an inclusive national reconciliation vision, including the development of a framework for national reconciliation and provision of support to grass-roots initiatives. The project also aims at advancing the implementation of the December 2015 Libyan political agreement and enabling the United Nations to support efforts to broaden outreach and consensus around national reconciliation, a key pillar of Libya's political transition process. The project will be implemented through a collaboration between the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and UNDP, together with non-governmental organizations.

Madagascar: learning from the past to inform future programming

51. Throughout 2016, Madagascar continued to face a number of peacebuilding challenges identified in the December 2015 peacebuilding priority plan, including

weak governance and accountability mechanisms, a security sector in need of reform, and serious disparities between the centre and the periphery and urban and rural communities.

52. In response, in August 2016, the Joint Steering Committee in Madagascar approved two initiatives to promote good governance and security sector reform under the \$11.5 million priority plan. The first initiative supports the implementation of the Government's strategy to fight corruption, the protection of whistle-blowers and the establishment of an independent national commission on human rights. The second aims at strengthening trust between the population and security forces, particularly through professionalization and capacity-building of the security forces and improved weapons control.

53. Finally, to facilitate the development of a coordinated package of support for the southern part of the country, the Peacebuilding Fund commissioned an anthropological study to guide the identification of priorities and modalities of support, and to enable learning from past unsuccessful attempts to build peace and address historical marginalization. On the basis of this analysis, the Joint Steering Committee is expected to approve the support package for the south in early 2017.

Mali: sustaining the peace agreement

54. Despite challenges in implementing the peace agreement, Peacebuilding Fund projects in Gao and Timbuktu yielded a number of positive results. Approximately 4,000 children returned to school in 2016 and the Minister of National Education integrated peacebuilding into school curricula, catalysing additional funds from Japan to expand activities to Mopti. The reporting to the police of gender-based violence increased from 1 to 13.7 per cent in the period from 2014 to 2016, indicating the greater confidence of victims in the police and judicial system. A gender section was established within the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission to respond to sexual violence in conflict. Despite these positive trends, Fund-sponsored community-monitoring surveys indicate that the effectiveness of traditional leaders in resolving community-based conflicts is declining and formal systems for conflict resolution are not yet in place. The surveys also reveal that lack of basic services and lack of employment opportunities in the north are among the main reasons why youth join armed groups.

55. Two cantonment sites, in Gao and Timbuktu, were constructed, employing local workers and improving the population's perception of the cantonment process. However, slowness in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process delayed the planned cantonment of 2,250 combatants at the sites. The project was able to catalyse funds for the construction of five additional sites, and the World Bank pledged \$26 million for reintegration programmes.

56. Through the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiatives, the Peacebuilding Fund approved \$2.5 million for projects implemented by non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

Myanmar: modest progress amid continued tension

57. Most Peacebuilding Fund investments drew to a close in 2016, evidencing modest gains. Initiatives addressing access to basic services and improving social cohesion helped improve perceptions of the government in Mon and Kayin States, and fostered establishment of networks of youth which crossed ethnic and religious lines to cooperatively respond to tensions that had been building since 2015. Support to the Centre for Diversity and National Harmony enabled regular reporting and cross-communal cooperation in restive Rakhine State, which enabled provision of real-time analysis amid persisting tensions. While the numbers of grave human rights violations perpetrated against children were seen to have increased — largely as a result of better monitoring and reporting — 167 children formerly associated with armed forces were released and received assistance through a joint project of UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNDP, and supported by the Fund, for reintegration into civilian life.

58. Through a new \$2.3 million investment, the Peacebuilding Fund will support the establishment of a joint monitoring committee to monitor the national ceasefire agreement, based on a request from the National League for Democracy-led Government.

The Niger: supporting youth and women in conflict-prone areas

59. In 2016, the Niger faced the challenges posed by terrorist attacks and an electoral crisis involving the majority and opposition parties in the wake of presidential and legislative elections held in the second quarter of 2016. To stave off electoral violence, the Peacebuilding Fund priority plan supported the participation of youth and women in sociopolitical dialogue in Niamey and Zinder.

60. Aside from responding to emergent elections-related crises, the priority plan is designed to support the Government in preventing violent extremism through a comprehensive package which encompasses dialogue, conflict mitigation and other confidence-building measures. Through the priority plan, 781 youth have been integrated socioeconomically and women in Tahoua and Zinder have been empowered to prevent recruitment of youth by armed and terrorist groups. These efforts have been underpinned by a wider programme aimed at promoting the involvement of youth in decision-making, encompassing, inter alia, familiarization of 9,600 people, including women and youth in Tahoua, Zinder, Tillabery and Agadez, with the implications of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015); and training, conducted by traditional leaders, of 2,375 women and youth on the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The plan extends to border areas, supporting several initiatives involving security and defence forces and the population and whose goal is to build confidence.

61. Following positive initial results, the priority plan has already catalysed the provision of €5 million by Denmark to take forward initiatives begun through Peacebuilding Fund investments.

Papua New Guinea: setting the stage for a peaceful referendum

62. The Peacebuilding Fund continued to open channels for United Nations engagement in advance of the upcoming referendum on the political status of the

Autonomous Region of Bougainville, scheduled for June 2019. The Fund's allocation of more than \$9 million follows priorities identified in the 2014 country context analysis, including enabling a conducive environment for a peaceful referendum through weapons disposal, reconciliation and community-level trauma healing and sustained civic awareness on the referendum.

63. With Peacebuilding Fund support, UNDP facilitated community-level discussions to ensure that peoples' voices would be heard in the pre-referendum period. In addition to information on how to participate, provision of psychosocial support to traumatized communities will help smooth the way towards their full engagement in community life as well as meaningful participation in discussions on the country's future. With UNICEF support, 35 trained counsellors have conducted outreach to targeted villages, while UN-Women hosted 120 community conversations with thousands of participants in more than 50 locations.

64. Through Peacebuilding Fund investments in women's empowerment, UN-Women supported the Autonomous Government of Bougainville in establishing the Office of Gender Equality, a significant milestone which will ensure the coordination of gender mainstreaming throughout the territory. UNDP also supported the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Gender in the Parliament of Bougainville. Also, in 2016, technical support provided by UN-Women helped in the ratification of the historic Bougainville Community Government Act, which mandates equal political representation of women and men in local elections and encourages women's political empowerment at community level.

Philippines: towards lasting peace in Mindanao

65. In 2016, amid renewed momentum for various peace processes, the Peacebuilding Fund supported a project aimed at generating acceptance of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro and the associated Basic Law. The project focused specifically on engaging women community leaders and youth, including the training of 134 women leaders and engagement of 588 youth in community-level dialogue through cultural projects. While the Basic Law was not passed by the congress, the project helped to systematically include the concerns of indigenous groups, women and youth in the development of the future Bangsamoro entity. In addition, it facilitated the establishment of a forum to enable the wider Moro leadership to develop common positions on the governance of Bangsamoro. Finally, Fund resources were used to provide economic opportunities — and therefore alternatives to violence — for conflict-affected youth.

Solomon Islands: supporting infrastructures for peace and reconciliation

66. Despite a fluid political environment, the Government of Solomon Islands prioritized reconciliation and unity during 2016, including the establishment of a steering committee for the drafting of a comprehensive framework for reparations. As the country faces an uncertain transition with the drawdown of the regional assistance mission in June 2017, the Peacebuilding Fund approved its first project in Solomon Islands, which will support a peaceful transition and help establish a foundation for peacebuilding work. The project, which began in mid-2016, supports inclusive dialogue and reconciliation; strengthening national capacity for the

implementation of a peace policy; and women's and youth's engagement in the peace process. The project has already assisted the Government in consulting with key provincial leaders and communities, supported the first national women's summit and provided opportunities to youth leaders and marginalized youth to engage with Government stakeholders on the elaboration of a forward-looking peacebuilding agenda.

Somalia: promoting the extension of authority for community recovery

67. The Federal Government of Somalia continued efforts in 2016 to enhance peace and stability throughout the country, with gains that remain significant but fragile. In order to sustain the important progress made, the Government will need to demonstrate its ability to deliver efficient, tangible results to the Somali population.

68. Within this context, the investments of the Peacebuilding Fund in Somalia focus on promoting the Federal Government's capacity to implement programmes within the framework of the New Deal compact, particularly in essential areas deemed too risky by other donors. A \$2 million investment, approved in May 2016, to improve access to basic services in areas recently recovered from Al-Shabaab is the first investment to be implemented through Somali national systems, constituting an important test of their ability to bolster other donors' confidence in following suit. A subsequent \$13 million investment, approved in June 2016, is also being implemented through national systems and kick-starts the new approach of the United Nations to assisting emerging federal States and supporting durable solutions for the increasing number of Somalis returning from Kenya, Yemen and beyond. This investment signalled the Fund's new performance-based management approach, entailing the transfer of \$8 million towards a first phase of implementation, with a following through of the remainder after the performance benchmarks have been met.

69. These efforts complement earlier Peacebuilding Fund investments aimed at improving rule of law, risk analysis and women's empowerment, including the elaboration of Somalia's first national gender policy. In addition, the Fund supported a high-risk innovative project aimed at achievement of an understanding of what drives Somalis to join Al-Shabaab and of how to reduce the risk of radicalization in prison.

Sri Lanka: a window of opportunity for building lasting peace

70. In 2016, Sri Lanka continued to build on the commitment to peacebuilding that it had made after the political transition of January 2015. The Government took a number of steps to implement a broad-based peacebuilding agenda, including towards the establishment of the office of missing persons, the right to information act and national consultations on reconciliation mechanisms.

71. The Government co-sponsored Human Rights Council resolution 30/1 on promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka¹ in October 2015 and committed Sri Lanka to a comprehensive approach to transitional justice

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/70/53/Add.1), chap. III.

and reconciliation. The Council resolution formed the basis for the peacebuilding priority plan developed in 2016, with support from the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The plan, unique within the Peacebuilding Fund portfolio because it is designed as a broad Government-owned strategy under which the Fund is one of many donors, sets out overall peacebuilding priorities, including good governance, resettlement and durable solutions, reconciliation and transitional justice, with needs totalling more than \$70 million, of which the Fund has contributed \$7 million. At the Government's request, this comprehensive plan also serves as a donor coordination mechanism to which the European Union and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have already contributed.

72. The priority plan investment follows earlier allocations in support of the return of displaced persons and the kick-starting of transitional justice through support for country-wide consultations with key stakeholders. Through the implementation of a \$1.47 million project jointly implemented by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNICEF, more than 2,500 families have sustainably returned to their pre-conflict lands through a package ensuring that returnees have access to shelter, health, education and other essentials. Support for their return has increased levels of confidence in government, with no returns to former displacement centres. In the future, assistance will be scaled up to support new return processes while investment in livelihoods will deepen the sustainability of returns.

Yemen: peacebuilding support in the midst of crisis

73. Since the outbreak of war in early 2015, the major part of Peacebuilding Fund support to Yemen has been limited to specific peacebuilding efforts launched under the peacebuilding priority plan. In 2016, those efforts included the training of 66 non-governmental organizations in conflict-sensitive approaches to humanitarian action, early recovery and development, as well as continued human rights monitoring by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

74. In November 2016, the Peacebuilding Fund approved a new project to support mediation efforts by my Special Envoy for Yemen aimed at facilitating a political settlement to end the conflict and a return to an inclusive Yemeni-led transition. Moving forward, the Fund will explore additional ways to bolster essential services and capacities for peace in the midst of conflict.

IV. Project performance in 2016

75. Performance assessment in 2016 was based on a review of all projects active for more than three months, a total of 102 projects (see table 2). Scores were obtained through a consultative process, utilizing periodic reports of project implementers, Joint Steering Committee reports, evaluations and mission reports, as well as knowledge of Fund staff and United Nations partners. Projects deemed off track to deliver expected outputs received a score of 1, while those that were on track to deliver outputs rated a 2 and those that were on track *and* generated additional evidence of contributing to peacebuilding outcomes — a much higher bar — received a score of 3.

Table 2
Trend analysis of the global performance of the Peacebuilding Fund 2013-2016

Peacebuilding Fund priority area		Total number of projects	On track to deliver agreed project outputs (percentage)	On track with supplemental evidence of a significant contribution to peacebuilding outcomes (percentage)
Priority area 1				
1.1	Security sector reform	9	88.8	22.2
1.2	Rule of law	12	91.6	25.0
1.3	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration	2	100.0	0.0
1.4	Political dialogue	12	91.6	41.6
Total 2016		35	90.9	30.3
Total 2015		39	82.1	23.1
Baseline 2013		21	85.7	38.1
Priority area 2				
2.1	Reconciliation	21	100.0	42.9
2.2	Democratic governance	8	87.5	62.5
2.3	Conflict prevention/management	12	83.2	41.8
Total 2016		41	92.6	46.3
Total 2015		39	74.4	30.8
Baseline 2013		28	82.1	32.1
Priority area 3				
3.1	Employment	2	100.0	0.0
3.2	Equitable access to social services	4	75.0	25.0
Total 2016		6	83.3	16.7
Total 2015		9	88.9	0.0
Baseline 2013		10	70.0	40.0
Priority area 4				
4.1	State capacities	3	100.0	0.0
4.2	Extension of state authority	4	50.0	0.0
4.3	Governance of peacebuilding resources	15	86.6	13.3
Total 2016		22	85.0	10.0
Total 2015		22	90.9	36.4

<i>Peacebuilding Fund priority area</i>	<i>Total number of projects</i>	<i>On track to deliver agreed project outputs (percentage)</i>	<i>On track with supplemental evidence of a significant contribution to peacebuilding outcomes (percentage)</i>
Baseline 2013	9	66.6	33.3
Overall 2016	102	90.0	32.0

Note: Scores based on Peacebuilding Support Office project assessments, periodic reports and independent country evaluations, December 2016.

76. By late 2016, 90 per cent of the Peacebuilding Fund's projects were on track to deliver peacebuilding results, marking an improvement for the third straight year in a row (there was an improvement from 78.6 per cent in 2014 to 81.7 per cent in 2015). Even more notable is the Fund's record of achievement based on actual evidence with respect to having contributed to a peacebuilding outcome, up from 26.6 per cent in 2015 to 32 per cent in 2016. A key factor driving these results has been the more mature portfolio compared with that of recent years. Multi-year programmatic investments in Guinea, Kyrgyzstan and Liberia, as well as a package of projects in Mali, all drew to a close in 2016, underscoring that peacebuilding results are most likely to be evident towards the end of the implementation cycle, after interventions have had an opportunity to trigger deeper changes in perception as well as in institutional and personal behaviour. A second factor is the Fund's guidance on improving results frameworks and a fourfold increase in evaluations of Fund investments, which have resulted in the provision of a more rigorous evidence base for programmatic oversight and lessons learned.

V. Peacebuilding Fund oversight and management

A. Advisory Group

77. The mandate of the fourth Advisory Group was extended to December 2017, in order to promote continuity in the support provided by the Group to the Peacebuilding Support Office during implementation of the joint General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, and amid ongoing efforts to replenish the Peacebuilding Fund.

78. The Advisory Group expressed its concern regarding the financial condition of the Peacebuilding Fund in a letter addressed to my predecessor in February 2016. While the September pledging conference sought to address the funding challenge, the Group and I will work together in 2017 to identify additional measures needed to ensure adequate and predictable financing.

79. Substantively, in its two meetings in 2016, the Advisory Group advised the Peacebuilding Fund on the implications of operationalizing "sustaining peace", reviewed options for increasing funding for peacebuilding and advised on the Fund's next Business Plan. Members of the Group, as dictated by its terms of reference, conducted monitoring or scoping visits to Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Mali,

Papua New Guinea and Tunisia (for Libya). The Group expressed its appreciation for the strides made by the Fund in terms of efficiency and transparency and stressed the importance of embedding strategic communications in the upcoming Business Plan so as to ensure a better communication of results.

B. Budget and personnel

80. The budget for managing the Peacebuilding Fund is derived from 3 per cent of donor contributions, which, in 2016, amounted to \$53.5 million, yielding additional overhead income of about \$1.6 million. The 2016 cost plan was \$2,681,196, approximately 8.6 per cent higher than in 2015, most of which was allocated to direct staff and other personnel costs (70 per cent) covering 12 fixed-term and temporary posts, operating and other direct costs (13 per cent), mission travel of staff and the Advisory Group (10 per cent) and programme support costs (7 per cent). The Fund continued to maximize available income through a range of cost mitigation measures, including economy class travel and utilization of staff secondments from UNHCR and donor partners including Australia, Japan and Switzerland. In addition, the Fund leveraged its partnerships with Interpeace and PeaceNexus to complement its support of programming in six countries.

C. Enhanced monitoring and evaluation

81. The results of the Peacebuilding Fund's investments in monitoring and evaluation since 2014 were evident in 2016, with substantial increases in both the quality and quantity of the monitoring and evaluation of Fund initiatives.

82. The bedrock of the Peacebuilding Fund's enhanced approach is the rigorous monitoring of results. Perception surveys were launched in Côte d'Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, the Niger and Papua New Guinea in both target and control group communities to enable the measurement of impact. Community-based monitoring schemes, which increase the transparency and accountability of the Peacebuilding Fund and government partners in respect of their engagement with citizens, were initiated in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, the Niger and Papua New Guinea. In each location, the Fund is piloting a different approach, including work carried out through national statistical offices, non-governmental organizations and commercial enterprises. The comparative advantages of these variations will be analysed throughout 2017.

83. The Peacebuilding Fund's first-ever evaluability assessment, which analyses project design and the robustness of monitoring frameworks, was conducted in Papua New Guinea in April 2016, enabling early course correction and stronger evaluation at programme's end. Final evaluations were commissioned in 23 projects or programmes in 2016, a nearly fivefold increase over 2015.

84. In 2016, Peacebuilding Fund staff conducted 31 technical support missions, representing a sixfold increase over 2015, to assist in strategy, design or implementation of programming in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sri Lanka and

Tajikistan. These missions were complemented by support provided by Fund partners, the PeaceNexus Foundation and Interpeace to Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, the Niger and South Sudan.

VI. Conclusion

85. The agenda for sustaining peace compels a redoubling of effort on the part not only of the Peacebuilding Fund, so as to ensure that its resources are used to greatest effect, but also of Member States, to ensure that they match their clear-cut political support of the Fund with adequate and sustainable financing. As the Fund moves into its next decade of support for countries in their effort to sustain peace, its new Business Plan will commit the Fund to a further tightening of its management practices and a sharpening of its focus on those needs that are traditionally underserved or unmet by donors that are less risk-tolerant. Whether it is able to act on a scale that keeps pace with demand will depend on its near-term ability to attract sufficient resources. Critical to resource mobilization will be the Fund's improvement of the means by which it contributes to knowledge on sustaining peace, gained through its enhanced monitoring and evaluation investments, and its prioritization of strategic communication, so as to increase transparency and facilitate engagement in the global conversation on what works best with respect to supporting countries in crisis.